

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, UR, OEXC
SUBJECT: TAGANKA'S YURI LYUBIMOV INVITED TO DIRECT AT ACT

1. IN DISCUSSION JUNE 7 WITH MMS. BUTROVA AT MINCULT AND LATER WITH YURIY PETROVICH LYUBIMOV AT THE TAGANKA THEATRE, FOLLOWING SEQUENCE EMERGES AS MOST LIKELY IF LYUBIMOV IS TO STAGE PLAY AT SAN FRANCISCO'S AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE (ACT) IN 1978, AS EDITH MARKSON HAS SUGGESTED. EMBASSY ASKS DEPARTMENT CONVEY FOLLOWING TO MRS. MARKSON, REQUESTING ACT'S SOONEST ACTION. ADVISE. (FULL REPORT OF THEATRE DELEGATION FOLLOWS BY AIRGRAM).

2. THOUGH MINCULT APPRECIATES THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS MADE IN MRS. MARKSON'S LETTER TO MINISTER OF CULTURE DEMICHEV, MINISTRY HAS NOT YET APPROVED THE ACT'S INVITATION TO LYUBIMOV TO STATE A PLAY TO OPEN THE ACT'S A1978/79 SEASON, MME. BUTROVA SAID. LYUBIMOV'S SCHEDULE FOR THE COMING SEASON IS ALL BUT FULL, ALREADY; INVITATIONS FOR HIS, AND HIS THEATER'S, APPEARANCES ABROAD ARRIVE ALMOST DAILY, "FROM ALL THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND SOME NOT SO DEVELOPED," BUTROVA ADDED. LYUBIMOV'S STAGING OF "THE QUEEN OF SPADES" AT THE PARIS OPERA HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL JUNE OF 1978, THUS HIS AVAILABILITY FOR WORK AT THE ACT BEGINNING IN JULY IS PROBLEMATIC. NEVERTHELESS, BUTROVA SAID, THE MINCULT WOULD LEAVE THE FINAL DECISION ABOUT HIS SCHEDULE TO LYUBIMOV HIMSELF, AND WILL SPEAK WITH HIM SOON, AS THE MINISTRY UNDERSTANDS THAT THE ACT INVITATION IS SERIOUS
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AND REQUIRES A DEFINITE ANSWER.

3. IN DISCUSSION LATER IN DAY WITH LYUBIMOV AND HIS SET DESIGNER FOLLOWING EMERGED: THEY ARE KEENLY INTERESTED IN STAGING A PLAY OF ACT'S CHOICE FOR OPENING O/A SEPT. 15, 1978, ASSUMING MINCULT'S FINAL APPROAL, AND PENDING ACT'S DOING FOLLOWING ASAP: ADDRESS TO MARILYN

JOHNSON AT EMBASSY FULL SET OF PLANS OF THEATER STAGE, FULLEST POSSIBLE DESCRIPTION THEATER'S TECHNICAL POSSIBILITIES, AND AS MANY PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE STAGE AREAS AS POSSIBLE. LYUBIMOV AND HIS DESIGNER NEED AT LEAST A MONTH FOR FIRST PLANS. VACATION AND FOREIGN TRAVEL SCHEDULES NECESSITATE BEGINNING PRELIMINARY WORK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. ACCORDINGLY, THEREFORE, THE PLAY HAS TO BE SELECTED ASAP, AND THE ACT SHOULD INITIATE SOONEST FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THIS MATTER. OF THE PLAYS MENTIONED IN MRS. MARKSON'S LETTER, THE CHOICE SHOULD BE BETWEEN "THE DAWNS ARE QUITE HERE" AND "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT". BUTROVA AND LYUBIMOV SEPARATELY AGREE THAT "THE EXCHANGE" WOULD NOT BE SUITABLE. LYUBIMOV IS STAGING "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT" IN BUDAPEST THIS SUMMER AND AT THE TAGANKA FOR THE NEW SEASON. HE WOULD BE CHALLENGED AT THE CHANCE TO STAGE IT FOR THE ACT, BUT WOULD REQUIRE ASSURANCE THAT THE FOUR TOP ROLES COULD BE WELL CAST, ESPECIALLY RASKOLNIKOV. IN EMBASSY'S VIEW, FINAL CHOICE OF PLAY WOULD FOLLOW LYUBIMOV-MINCULT DISCUSSIONS. INTERESTINGLY, IN EARLIER DISCUSSION BUTROVA SAID THAT "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT" WOULD BE AN INTERESTING PLAY FOR AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE, WHICH KNOWS SO MUCH ABOUT DOSTOYEVSKY.

5. THUS, FOR THE ACT TO CONSIDER: IF THE THEATER WISHES TO PLACE "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT" AHEAD OF "THE DAWNS ARE QUITE HERE," IT SHOULD DO SO IMMEDIATELY IN A FOLLOW-UP LETTER, NOTING THAT IT REALIZES THAT THIS WOULD BE A DIFFICULT PLAY TO STAGE, OFFERING ASSURANCES THAT A QUALITY CAST WOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AVAILABLE. ACT SHOULD IN THIS CASE REITERATE THE ASSURANCES GIVEN BY MARKSON AND HASTINGS IN MOSCOW, THAT "THE DAWNS ARE QUITE HERE" WOULD ALSO BE A SPLENDID CHOICE, WOULD FIND A RECEPTIVE AUDIENCE AND WOULD BE ASSURED A GOOD PLACE IN THE THEATER'S REPERTORY FOR THE 1978-79 SEASON. IN SHORT, THE ACT SHOULD MAKE ITS CHOICE, THEN ALLOW AS HOW EITHER PLAY WOULD SUIT IT FINE, AND LEAVE THE MATTER TO THE MOSCOW FOLKS TO DECIDE.

6. THE LOCAL DECISION HAVING BEEN MADE, LYUBIMOV AND HIS DESIGNER WOULD PREPARE A FULL SET OF DRAWINGS, WOULD PLAN A 10-DAY VISIT TO THE ACT IN JAN/FEB, 1978, DURING WHICH TIME THEY WOULD WORK WITH THE ACT'S SCENOGRAPHERS AND WOULD ALSO HOPE TO MEET THE SUGGESTED LEADS.

7. LYUBIMOV WOULD EXPECT TO BE ABLE ARRIVE IN SAN FRANCISCO, PROBABLY DIRECTLY FROM PARIS, IN LATE JUNE OR EARLY JULY, 1978. HE WAVED OFF THE SUGGESTION EARLIER VOICED BY BUTROVA THAT HIS COMMITMENT TO THE PARIS OPERA

WOULD INTERFERE WITH THE ACT'S PROPOSAL. HE IS PREPARED,
HE REITERATED, TO DEVOTE HIS ENTIRE SUMMER VACATION IN 1978
TO WORK IN SAN FRANCISCO.
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